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## **Shafer introduces umbilical cord blood initiative**

**ATLANTA** – Saying he wants Georgia to be the “center of ethical research,” State Sen. David Shafer (R-Duluth), has introduced legislation creating the newborn umbilical cord blood initiative for stem cell research. The legislation also bans human cloning.

“Stem cell research efforts have been hampered by the controversy over embryonic stem cells,” Sen. Shafer said today after filing the legislation at the State Capitol. “But stem cells are not found only in embryos. Umbilical cord blood is rich in stem cells, which can be used for research without destroying embryos.

“Stem cell research using cells from cord blood already has resulted in treatments for a wide range of diseases,” he went on to add. “Tragically, after most births, the umbilical cord is thrown away as medical waste.”

The measure, which Shafer calls the *Delivering the Cure Act of 2006*, creates the Georgia Commission for the Newborn Umbilical Cord Blood Initiative, and directs it to create a newborn cord blood bank in partnership with one or more of the state’s public colleges or universities. The legislation also will provide counseling and information to pregnant women about the initiative, and how they can donate the newborn’s umbilical cord blood.

“The goal is universal collection for both scientific research and medical treatment,” Shafer continued. “We want Georgia to be the Red Cross of umbilical cord blood banking.”

Shafer doesn’t want his bill to give a green light to human cloning however, so the legislation specifically bans it.

“I want Georgia to be the center of ethical scientific research,” Shafer said, emphasizing the word ethical. “I believe this cord blood bank will encourage scientific research and discovery without crossing the lines that our society ultimately will regret crossing.”

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*Sen. David Shafer is chairman of the Senate Science and Technology Committee. He represents the 48<sup>th</sup> Senate district which includes portions of Fulton and Gwinnett counties. He may be reached at 404.651.7738 or via e-mail at [david.shafer@senate.ga.gov](mailto:david.shafer@senate.ga.gov).*